Literary Cabinet.

Si non tantus fructus perciperetur ex his studiis, quantum percipi constat, sed ex his delectatio sola peteretur; tamen hæc animi remissio judicanda esset libero homine dignissima. CICERO

VOL. I.] YALE COLLEGE, SATURDAY, APRIL, 4, 1807. [No. 10.

Strictures on Palæphilus.

[Continued from page 66.]

LET us now proceed to an examination of the observations upon rhyme. The first sentence that merits notice is the following—"*But in my view we cannot reasonably disbelieve the assertion that it was not unknown to the Romans.*" Beneath this heap of negatives upon negatives, the sense of the sentence is so deeply buried, that it must require some attention to the effect produced by them to determine the precise idea; the English reader must therefore be informed that in the opinion of this author, the Romans were acquainted with rhyme—this upon the faith of an honest man was all that was meant to be conveyed. "*It is in vain to say that we do not find it in general use among them.*" Oh, my good Sir! no one will contend with you, that the use of any thing not being general is an argument against the use of it at all—had all your assertions been as evident you would have spared me the trouble of correcting you.

But unfortunately the next member of this sentence is not so perspicuous. ("*It is in vain to say) that we have no rules with regard to it, and that there are no circumstances in the ancient Rhetoricians, which can lead us to suppose, that they had a knowledge of rhyme. Had we now no account of Sotades and his verses we should consider the moderns as the inventors of Sotadical lines.*" A precious argument truly! The ancient Rhetoricians are silent upon the subject of rhyme, but that is no argument that the Romans were unacquainted with it; because had we now no account of Sotades and his verses (i. e. had Quintilian and other ancient authors been silent with respect to them) we should have thought them a modern invention. Ohe! Tam satis! But what follows! "*We scarcely ever see English poetry written after the manner of the ancient heroic poetry, yet instances have been witnessed. If therefore the unfrequency is an argument against rhyme, as having been known to the Romans, it will be equally valid with regard to the instances, which I have enumerated.*" Let us see what syllogisms can be formed from this knotty reasoning—English Hexameters have seldom been written; "*yet instances have been witnessed.*" *Ergo* English Hexameters must have been written. In like manner: Latin rhymes were seldom written; *yet instances have been witnessed.*" *Ergo* Latin rhymes must have been written. Admirable logic indeed! Equal no doubt in point of solidity to the

argument recorded by Martinus Scriblerius of famous memory. Whatever is black and white is pied, and whatever is pied is black and white : *Ergo* black and white is pyed,and *vice versa* pied is black and white.

"*I shall not enter here into an examination of the reasons why we find so few rhyming lines among the Latin poets.*" And what reason is offered ? why truly "*they will present themselves to every one who reflects upon the subject, and moreover* (aye there's the rub) *I shall be obliged to extend my present observations further than I designed.*" Yea, friend Palæphilus ! I perceive thou wouldst, and "*moreover*" it seemeth to me that thou wouldest have found great difficulty therein ! An excellent way of retreatting indeed, when a subject is too strong for one ! It brings to mind the conduct of uncle Toby, who when he was pinched with an argument always whistled *Lullibulero.*

Next appear whole armies of quotations with the elegant and dignified phrase "*Here they are*" marching in the van. It is really diverting to see with whrt facility this gentleman can either lengthen or contract words as necessity may require. Procrustes himself never practised the levelling system with more dexterity. But I must enquire of him if he never heard of such a thing as quantity ?

By a little attention to that, he will be enabled to perceive the impropriety of making the last feet of a hexameter and pentameter rhyme with each other, and the utter impossibility of lengthening the penultimate of Ædifico. But let us reserve the inquiry whether these quotations can be justly said to rhyme, to another part of the discussion—and proceed to consider the subsequent observations—"*Should the same endings occur in English poetry we would not hesitate to say that the piece was written in rhyme ; why not then pass the same judgment upon these Epigrams though written in Latin ?*" Undoubtedly honest Palæphilus ! nothing can be more evident. There is no reason in the world why Latin should not enjoy its rights and privileges as well as English. But since people are so barbarous what is to be done ?

I will not, Messrs. Editors fatigue you, by an enumeration of all that is exceptionable in this nonsensical farrago. I must, however, observe that the subsequent argument (if indeed it can deserve that appellation) is not unworthy of the preceding, and at the same time it affords the author an excellent pretext for adorning his pages with the illustrious names of "*Amaltheus, Louis de Maguiron the princess of Eboli,*" and many other ornaments of the like kind "*nantes in gurgite vasto.*" Next comes an Epitaph upon *St. Pavin* by one De Fieubet, which also tells the world that the author understands French ; it certainly could not be introduced to inform his readers, that stanzas in which the first line rhymes with the fourth, and the second with the third are '*not unknown*" at the present day ; for I would not willingly believe that he meant so grossly to insult their understanding. And here I cannot but remark how greatly the author is correcting his morals and improving his taste by searching for the verses of Sotades, and reading the works of De Fieubet. Surely we need

not be surprised that he so strenuously advocates the excellency of Latin rhymes; since he is so conversant in the stews and kennels of literature.

The assertion made by this author at the close of his first number is really very extraordinary. "*This hitherto unnoticed and unexamined subject.*" Unnoticed and unexamined! It is indeed something more than presumption to say that all who have considered Latin rhyme as barbarous, have adopted that opinion without any examination whether it be true or false. Pray Sir, have you no recollection that Blair has given us his sentiments on this point, and can you suppose that such a man would hastily decide upon a subject "*unnoticed and unexamined?*" But beside all this, has Harris said nothing upon this kind of versification? Has Monboddo passed it over in silence. It would be becoming in you Sir to read a little more upon this subject before you presume to hazard so confident an assertion.

[To be continued]

"No one," in modern days, "in his right senses, is seized with the spirit of divination."

PLATOS TIMAEUS.

ALTHOUGH I shall adopt this motto no further than it answers present purposes, yet as I wish to allow to SPINOZA the truth of one of his arguments, I cannot better point out that one, than by making a trifling addition to his motto, and assuming it as my own. The reason why I believe in the madness of modern prophets, is, that a *late* writer, who had been made acquainted with Prescience, has in a *late* paper, proved, unanswerably, that all modern prophets and prophetesses are mad. He has not proved this directly, but he has given us premises, from which we can draw the conclusion. Thus, from his premises, we derive the following syllogism.

All, who make professions of *Prescience*, are mad,

A late writer has made such a profession;

Therefore this writer is mad.

Thus far, in accordance with my motto.

When a person undertakes to prove the truth of any proposition, and, after establishing it satisfactorily to himself, attributes its cause to madness, we are led to conclude, that he, having imbibed some great stimulant, has flown

- - - - "Off in a tangent,
And made a harum-scarum range on't."

Of what use are the examples of Roman Catholics, (which, I suppose, were intended by the English writer,) the "throes," "convulsions," "groans," "foam," "incoherent ejaculations," &c. of modern bedlamites, to prove the madness of those who are really inspired? How does Sybil, the priestess of a heathen deity, heaving from her breast "the incumbent God," affect the point in debate? We do not contend for the inspiration of the Cassandia and Sybil of VIRGIL; but we contend for that revelation which comes from God only.

We are next informed that the Jews "believed an inflamed imagination, and a degree of madness to be proper dispositions for intercourse with heaven." Prove this, SPINOZA, and you will do what your predecessor could not: Prove it, SPINOZA, and I will concede to your doctrines.

Consider the character of this "PHILO." Was he not a bitter enemy to the prophets? If so, this single circumstance will make his assertions as nugatory, as we can prove them unfounded.

Could we examine the scriptures, without occupying too great a portion of the CABINET, we should find that nothing like *madness* or *enthusiasm* can be charged to any of the prophets. The instance of ELISHA, quoted by our author, furnishes not even an example of ardor, much les of enthusiasm. The prophecies of the Jews were frequently recited in poetry, accompanied with music, that they might be more deeply impressed upon the minds of those concerned. But where is the enthusiasm of Elisha? Does he not appear rational both before and after the playing of the minstrel? Let those who wish for further satisfaction, read the chapter in which this transaction is recorded, and then let them say, whether the "wild and frantic transport of Pythia" is here displayed?

Had our author attentively perused the ninth chapter of Hosea, which contains the passage he has quoted, he would have discovered, that this verse does not relate to the "rushing phrenzy of inspiration," but to false prophets, who had corrupted the people.

Thus, because the priestess of Apollo was frantic, and false prophets were fools, we are called upon to relinquish the "rock of our salvation."

Should SPINOZA, hereafter, give us the productions of a phrenzied imagination, for the dictates of reason, he may expect to be refuted by silence; but should he *surprize* us with fair, candid reasoning, he may expect to hear from his friend, CLARK.

On the Immortality of the Soul.

No. III.

THE soul's SUSCEPTIBILITY of IMPROVEMENT, may be urged as another argument in favor of its immortality. Brutes arrive at a certain pitch of improvement, which they cannot pass. The instinct, which is common to them all, and which spurs them on to obtain their food, and in other respects, to provide for their own happiness, is usually as perfect after a few years, as in any period of their lives. But with mankind it is otherwise. The faculties of human beings go on towards perfection by slow gradations. They are not at once, in the possession of all their attainments. After their mental powers have arrived at what is usually termed maturity, they are still capable of being enlarged; and at the close of the greatest exertions, and long continued advances, they have not arrived at a bound, beyond what they cannot pass. So long as the body continues strong and vigorous, so long the mind goes from strength to strength. Cultivation greatly increases its power of comprehension; and there is every reason to believe that it never arrives at the farthest limit of possible improvement, but that it is capable of endless progression. So long as men have continued in the world, they have been making improvements in knowledge, and at the conclusion of life, they have been no more satisfied than at first, and no nearer the perfection of their nature.

Can it be, that such growing faculties, in the midst of their improvements are to dwindle into

nothing? Will such opening blossoms be plucked before they shall be fully expanded? If God has designed men merely for a temporary existence, why has he given them faculties so capable of being enlarged? In the works of the natural world, every kind of vegetable life usually comes to maturity before it withers and dies. There is a point of perfection at which they arrive: and can it be thought, that intelligent beings alone, should be made without any reference to the perfection of their nature; that they should be cut down for ever, while in comparative infancy? Shall none ever arrive at manhood, or continue to progress toward that state? Shall the universe never behold a sight so pleasing, as an intelligent being, raised from weakness and helpless infancy, travelling through one degree of excellence after another, till he shall look down upon the highest conceivable perfection as much as he now looks up to it? Such a sight must be pleasing in the eyes of God himself. Is it not therefore to be presumed that human beings will for ever be displaying new degrees of knowledge and excellence; and that like plants, having grown for a time, they will be transplanted into a different soil, to flourish and to grow up to perfection!

[To be continued.]

ERRATA.

Read *emotion* for *emotions*, page 65, line 21 from bottom, right hand column; and for the phrase *different port*, page 66, 11th line from bottom, left hand column, read, *in the other part of the alternative.*

The Bower.

.....Sometimes
We bid bright Fiction to resemble Truth,
And sometimes speak what Truth herself approves.

HES. THEOG.

The Fluctuations of Fashion.

A POEM.

THE bards of past times, famous for invention,
Said many things well worthy our attention,
And one of them, the genius of his age,
Declar'd point-blank, that all the world's a stage.
I think as much—you must not take it ill,
'Tis true, good folks, believe it how you will.
Such things I've thought on, but I durst not hint 'em,
To any soul except our neighbour Squintum.
The "world's a stage," I'll prove it pro and con,
And every man has got his buskins on.
Here diff'rent sexes play their various parts,
Love is the game, and trumps are always hearts.
Each one attempts his failings to disguise,
And seem all perfect, in his neighbor's eyes:
Both sexes using all the arts they know,
To gain their conquests, by an outside show.
"You've hit it friend, cry'd he, I must confess,
"I can't away with all this pomp and dress.
"To hear these upstarts talk about the fashion,
"It kills me up—I cant restrain my passion.
"Time was, when merit lay in noble birth,

" When wealth and talents were the marks of worth.
" These mere externals no one could endure,
" But look'd within for mental furniture ;
" Then each one dress'd with dignity and grace,
" Nor males, nor females, wore perfumes or lace.
" No ups, nor downs, and no one thought of dashing,
" But the same suit was always in the fashion.
" A broadcloth coat, in those good days of yore,
" Was made broad-back'd with three full yards or more,
" Buckram'd and lin'd throughout down to the knees,
" With two large pockets for the bread and cheese,
" Reaching below the small clothes they then wore,
" And hid all, save the pigeon flap before,
" Buttons both sides not half an inch apart,
" And brass enough to load a tinker's cart.
" This made for wedding or such like occasion,
" Would last a life time, without alteration.
" The man's deceas'd ; we hear the doleful story,
" Next news, said coat is in his inventory,
" This to my youngest son I do bequeath,
" Wear it, my son, the longest day you breathe.
" Vests were made full, not like the modern fop,
" And scallop'd out at bottom and at top.
" Stout round toe'd shoes, with silver buckles grac'd,
" All shining so, that you might see your face,
" To crown the whole, and to complete the rig,
" A cock'd up hat, and then a large bag-wig.
" This form'd the Sunday suit, lock'd up always,
" Except at weddings, church or holidays.
" When all dash'd forth, and no one made pretence
" To tell the sexton, from his reverence.
" The women too, in those good days of yore,
" Oh ! days once past forgotten and no more !
" Put on high rolls, strap caps, with narrow lace,
" Which set off beauty with a comely grace.
" Their gowns were homespun, taken from the loom,
" With waist as long as handle of a broom,
" And these compress'd with stays begirted fast,
" Till made as slender as an hour-glass ;
" Or like a wasp, whose form so exile seems
" A middle term scarce joins the two extremes.
" These were the suits, all had them who were able,
" No alteration, all remained stable,
" At length alas ! to be like foreign nations,
" All hands grew proud, and fond of innovations.
" Instead of pinch-back'd gowns, which pleas'd so lately,
" Women determin'd to be large, and stately,
" The gowns were widen'd then with many a gore,
" And trail'd at bottom ; a full yard, or more,
" To rsise the trail and make it clear the ground,
" A pair of hoops not less than six feet round,
" Was introduc'd, and in a sudden squall,
" Slap on the beam ends, went the rigging all ;
" She pois'd; then rose in air, like French balloon,
" Such as men often sail in, to the moon.
" Oh ! wondrous female, comely form thinks I,
" A form, just six feet thick, and four feet high,
" Sure, 'twill be sport, to see you pass the door,
" Ah ! mind and keep your transverse well before.
" Timber soon fail'd, and good folks were afraid
" That such large hoops, would spoil the cooper's trade ;
" For honest husbands couldn't for their lives,

" Tell which to hoop, their barrels or their wives.
" Some,more uxorious, undertook the task,
" And hopp'd around, like cooper 'round a cask.
" Thus the hoop-fever rag'd, good lack! and then,
" At once a sudden panic struck the men,
" The public mind was blown up to passion,
" 'Twas huzza! boys, short hair has come in fashion.
" This rais'd abroad, a dreadful scene ensues,
" Off come cock'd hats, bag-wigs, and eelskin cues,
" Some white, some red, some grey for fifty years,
" All felt the clippings of the barber's shears.
" The fleeces varied, some were large and full,
" And then again, great cry and little wool.
" These all collected, a huge pile they made,
" A noble wind-fall for the saddler's trade.
" Mark now the change! what sudden transformation,
" Some fell enchantment sure pervades the nation.
" Just so young tad-poles, wiggling 'mongst the bogs,
" Feel all at once, an itching to be frogs,
" And soon their hinder parts transform'd they find,
" Then all leap forth, and drop their tails behind.
" The broadcloth coats were alter'd very soon:
" Small clothes, were then exchang'd for pantaloons,
" Which set skin-tight, and then the close bootees,
" That made e'en clowns to walk with grace and ease,
" Or on some bandy-legs, like Belteshazzar,
" 'Twas ten to one both knees would smite together.
" This pair equipp'd—to see them walk, 'twas sport,
" Ha! ha! 'twas male and female, long and short.
" Booted and hoop'd methinks 'twas much the same,
" As joining horseblock, and a quilting frame.
" Next bell-crown'd hats, and triple-cap'd surtouts,
" And then long knee-bows, then Suwarrow boots,
" Made without draw, the toes not sharp, but peeking,
" The soals had always nine-pence worth of squeaking,
" Completely form'd for limbs of slender turn,
" And sat much like a dasher to a churn.
" But this did'nt suit, to hide such grotesque figure,
" The fashion chang'd the pantaloons grew bigger,
" Were lengthen'd out three cubits and a span,
" 'Till they completely swallow'd up the man.
" To keep them up, they next must introduce
" Another sort of garment into use.
" Fitted, for ought I know, to both the genders,
" These by the gentry folks are call'd suspenders.
" With these you'll see the modern beau equipp'd,
" And many more accoutrements well tip'd;
" His neck full wreath'd and whiskers cut in ton,
" And frizzled head with little cue ty'd on.
" Then lo! he struts with grace and " finish'd air,
" Girls set your caps! look out! see who goes there."
Hold! neighbor hold! said I, your reason dotes,
Young folks you know must sow a few wild oats.
" Ah true, said he, but what a plenteous crop,
" When old and young turn fools, and act the fop!
" The female dress is doom'd to fluctuation,
" Its ups and downs exceed, all calculation
" Just like the moon, it has its old and new,
" The full, first quarter, and is horned too.
" Crescent and gibbous, then anon you'll see,
" Its now eclips'd, and now in apogee.
" Change after change, and how long does it last,
" Can any one repeat for ten years past!

" Go to your almanacs, there the printer says,
" Perhaps there's snow, or rain about these days.
" Some garments were for men, and some for women,
" But now of late they wear them all in common.
" Jackets sometimes the ladies lov'd to dash in,
" And then forthwith the spencers came in fashion.
" Then boots, then duck bill'd shoes lac'd up with twine,
" And other garments purely masculine.
" To go bare neck'd, was lately all the ton,
" But now they've got their comfortables on.
" A thousand arts to mend the faults of nature;
" The broad are narrow'd, the crooked are made straighter.
" Where nature fails, there art supplies the wantage,
" To set off the projections to advantage.
" Clothing is thin, to make the form look trimmer,
" 'Till cramp'd as slim as *Time* is in the primer.
" From head to foot their dress is made full tight,
" And like a corn-bag all the way alike.
" To such extremes have many gone of late,
" 'Tis truly sportive to observe their gait.
" In close reef'd coats, which can't be nam'd in rhyme,
" They'll step about four inches at a time.
" They fear no cold, but brave the wintry storm;
" What need of clothes? since pride can keep them warm.
" Mother cautions well, but daughter don't believe her,
" Next comes the fidgets, or the muslin fever.
" Our modern tips can bear no weighty lumber,
" But tinsels, sprigs and gewgaws without number,
" A score of combs the female head adorns,
" These raise the price of manufacturned horns.
" Then jockey or crape, or Jeffersonian bonnet,
" With every kind of crinkum crankum on it.
" Rang'd at all points, so as can't be express'd,
" And like—what shall I say? a huzza's nest.
" No pains are spar'd to deck a fair outside,
" Both high and low have all grown gentrify'd.
" Their visits too, must all be made at night,
" They meet at dusk, take tea by candle-light.
" And then begins the modish conversation,
" All about fashions, balls and conjuration.
" Such topics please, and naught can give offence,
" Except it's homespun or like sober sense.
" Should one attempt to moralize or reason,
" 'Twould be a crime but little short of treason.
" The God of Love, presides at all such places,
" And here spruce beaux all meet to learn the graces.
" Watch every look, and motion of the fair,
" Each smile gives pleasure, and each frown despair.
" Her frozen form the gazing lover burns,
" He feels cold chills, and burning fits by turns,
" Till by a fatal dart from Cupid's quiver,
" He falls subdu'd; a shaft has pierc'd his liver.
" Young men beware, mind and secure your hearts,
" Great is the power, you know, of female arts!
" Who rashly blind, within their grapples ventures,
" And once gets hook'd, and stretch'd 'upon love's tenters,
" Has lost his peace, and feels no more the man,
" Than parched shrimp, in Pluto's frying-pan."

Thus much we've said, we hope there's none offended,
Here we stop short, and Squintum's words are ended.

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